

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMCONSUL BELFAST

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: PRESS SURVEY OF IRA FUND-RAISING IN US

REF: LONDON 16886

1.(BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) EMBASSY MAY INFORM SUNDAY TIMES THAT FUND-RAISING ON BEHALF OF FOREIGN INTERESTS IS LEGAL IN THE US, BUT THOSE WHO DO SO, EITHER ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS, MUST REGISTER WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT OF 1938, AS AMENDED, AND THE RULES AND REGULATIONS PRESCRIBED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. REGISTRATION STATEMENTS COVER HALF-YEARLY PERIODS AND ARE OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION.

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2. IRISH NORTHERN AID COMMITTEE (INAC) AND SEAN WALSH

ARE SEPARATELY REGISTERED AND ARE OBVIOUS FRONT ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE PROVISIONAL IRA. FOR EXAMPLE, INAC HAS LISTED JOE CAHILL AS RECIPIENT OF ITS FUNDS. WALSH LISTS RUAIRI O'BRADAIGH AS HIS FOREIGN PRINCIPAL. INAC CLAIMS TO BE THE ONLY ORGANIZATION IN US COLLECTING FUNDS FOR THE QUOTE REPUBLICAN UNQUOTE MOVEMENT IN IRELAND. WALSH HEADS THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS AND CLAIMS TO REPRESENT SEVERAL IRISH-AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS.

3. ARMS EXPORTS ARE COVERED UNDER SECTION 414 OF MUTUAL SECURITY ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED, (10 FAM 180 APPENDIX A) AS WELL AS CUSTOMS REGULATIONS. SEVEN SEPARATE TRIALS IN US OF IRA-RELATED GUNRUNNING HAVE RESULTED IN GUILTY VERDICTS; THE LAST TRIAL PUT FOUR MEN, TWO AMERICANS, TWO IRISH, IN FEDERAL PRISONS FOR SIX YEARS.

4. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) ALL OF ABOVE IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. WHILE SUNDAY TIMES REQUEST IS LEGITIMATE, WE WOULD PREFER TO LIMIT OUR RESPONSE TO PARAS 1-3 ABOVE, AND SUGGEST THAT, INSTEAD, THE TIMES SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION FROM HMG. BRITISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON IS WELL AWARE OF ALL ASPECTS OF IRA FUND-RAISING, AND SO, PRESUMABLY, IS FCO. (PARA 2 SHOULD BE ON BACKGROUND.)

5. THE PROBLEM HERE IS THAT ACTIVE SUPPORT OF INAC AND IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS BY CERTAIN PROMINENT AMERICANS, AS WELL AS SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, BRINGS TO THE FORE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH PRECLUDE THE TYPE OF ACTIVE COOPERATION EVIDENTLY DESIRED BY SUNDAY TIMES. NEITHER DOES DEPARTMENT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD PUBLICIZE USG EFFORTS TO ENFORCE ITS LAWS SPECIFICALLY AGAINST THE IRA. NOT ONLY WOULD THAT LEAVE DEPARTMENT OPEN TO CHARGES OF COLLUSION WITH BRITISH, HOWEVER UNTRUE, BUT END RESULT WOULD PROBABLY BE ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO IRA AS RESULT OF PUBLICITY GENERATED.

6. SHOULD SUNDAY TIMES WISH TO INTERVIEW USG OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON (STATE, JUSTICE, TREASURY), ON IRA FUND-RAISING, BRITISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON COULD PRESUMABLY LINE THIS UP QUICKLY, AS IT HAS DONE IN PAST. BRITISH
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EMBASSY CAN ALSO ADVISE ON LOCATION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS SUCH AS INAC REGISTRATION STATEMENTS, CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS AND OTHER MATERIAL ON IRA ACTIVITIES IN US. THIS WOULD BE UP TO BRITISH EMBASSY AND SUNDAY TIMES.

7. IN SUM, EMBASSY SHOULD PROVIDE ONLY MINIMAL ASSISTANCE TO SUNDAY TIMES, POINTING OUT THAT HMG IS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION DESIRED, AND ADDING THAT

DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ARE GENERALLY WILLING TO MEET WITH
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS.

8. REGRET DELAY. KISSINGER

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